

Whereas the former Syrian military photographer “Caesar” meticulously photographed the Assad regime’s widespread system of arrest, detention, torture and murder of tens of thousands of Syrian protesters and dissidents, and then courageously smuggled 55,000 of those photographs out of Syria, exposing the regime’s barbarity for the world to witness;

Whereas the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019 (22 U.S.C. 8791 note), which became law on December 20, 2019—

(1) seeks accountability for the Assad regime and its international enablers for atrocities against the Syrian people;

(2) denies the Assad regime the resources to fuel its war machine; and

(3) sends a clear signal to the international community against normalizing, rehabilitating, or legitimizing Assad and his backers.

Whereas Iran and Russia intervened militarily in support of the Assad regime, enabling and actively participating in the Assad regime’s horrific brutalities against civilians in favor of advancing their narrow interests and in some cases empowered extremist groups;

Whereas in pursuit of its narrow self-interest, Russia, backed by China, has blunted United Nations’ efforts to preserve vital border crossings that serve as a critical humanitarian lifeline to the beleaguered Syrian population.

Whereas the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria exacerbated the suffering of the Syrian people through the violent and hostile seizure of territory, misapplication of Islamic law, destruction and smuggling of antiquities, and oil smuggling, turning Syria into a global hub for terrorist activity;

Whereas the Assad regime, and its Russian and Iranian backers, are largely responsible for the death of more than 500,000 Syrian civilians, and the displacement of more than 12,000,000 men, women, and children within and outside of Syria’s borders, imposing irreversible trauma and loss for a whole generation;

Whereas millions of Syrians are struggling to survive, with more than 13,000,000 Syrians who are in need of humanitarian assistance and more than 9,000,000 Syrians who are facing food insecurity;

Whereas international efforts to secure a peaceful political transition of power in Syria, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, adopted on December 18, 2015, remain stymied, due almost entirely to the intransigence of Russia and the Assad regime, holding the people of Syria hostage;

Whereas the people and Government of the United States support the people of Syria in their aspirations for peace, stability, dignity, and accountability;

Now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) solemnly observes the 10th anniversary of the Syrian uprising;

(2) affirms that it is the policy of the United States—

(A) to seek a political solution to the Syrian conflict;

(B) to continue to stand with the people of Syria;

(C) to further efforts to secure a permanent ceasefire;

(D) to continue work on the constitutional committee free from regime intransigence; and

(E) to foster conditions for free and fair elections in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254;

(3) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to promote adherence to the laws of war by all parties engaging in hostilities in Syria;

(4) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to support international humanitarian efforts to assist innocent civilians, including through support for displaced populations and the promotion of accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses;

(5) commits to continuing efforts to hold the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian backers accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity; including through implementation of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2019;

(6) commends the bravery of Syrian human rights defenders who, in the service of justice and accountability, have courageously documented the atrocities committed by the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian backers over the course of this conflict;

(7) condemns the indiscriminate use of force by all actors in Syria, including the Assad regime, its proponents, its opponents, and extremist groups;

(8) calls on the United States Government to reinvigorate diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict as outlined under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, and to expand humanitarian aid to the Syrian people so they may—

(A) be free from violence, whether from the State or other armed groups;

(B) return to their communities of their own free will and in an informed manner;

(C) participate in transitional justice; and

(D) decide their own futures through free and fair elections that result in a legitimate representative government that serves all Syrians.

SENATE RESOLUTION 100—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 100

Whereas, as of March 2021, there are approximately 3,803,000,000 women and girls in the world;

Whereas women and girls around the world—

(1) have fundamental human rights;

(2) play a critical role in providing and caring for their families and driving positive change in their communities;

(3) contribute substantially to food security, economic growth, the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the sustainability of peace and stability; and

(4) must have meaningful opportunities to more fully participate in and lead the political, social, and economic lives of their communities;

Whereas the advancement and empowerment of women and girls around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States and is critical to the achievement of global peace and prosperity;

Whereas the National Security Strategy of the United States, published in December 2017—

(1) declares that “[s]ocieties that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful”;

(2) supports “efforts to advance women’s equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs”; and

(3) recognizes that “governments that fail to treat women equally do not allow their societies to reach their potential”;

Whereas, on October 6, 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (22 U.S.C. 2152j et seq.) was enacted into law, which includes requirements for a government-wide “Women, Peace, and Security Strategy” to promote and strengthen the participation of women in peace negotiations and conflict prevention overseas, enhanced training for relevant United States Government personnel, and follow-up evaluations of the effectiveness of the strategy;

Whereas the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, dated June 2019, recognizes that—

(1) the “[s]ocial and political marginalization of women strongly correlates with the likelihood that a country will experience conflict”;

(2) there is a “tremendous amount of untapped potential among the world’s women and girls to identify, recommend, and implement effective solutions to conflict”, and there are “benefits derived from creating opportunities for women and girls to serve as agents of peace via political, economic, and social empowerment”; and

(3) barriers to the meaningful participation of women and girls in conflict prevention and resolution efforts “include underrepresentation in political leadership, pervasive violence against women and girls, and persistent inequality in many societies”;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (commonly referred to as “UN Women”), peace negotiations are more likely to end in a peace agreement when women and women’s groups play a meaningful role in the negotiation process;

Whereas, according to a study by the International Peace Institute, a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in the development of the peace agreement;

Whereas the joint strategy of the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) entitled “Department of State & USAID Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism” and dated May 2016—

(1) notes that women can play a critical role in identifying and addressing drivers of violent extremism in their families, communities, and broader society; and

(2) commits to supporting programs that engage women “as key stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism in their communities”;

Whereas, according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, the full and meaningful participation of women in criminal justice professions and security forces vastly enhances the effectiveness of the security forces;

Whereas, despite the contributions of women to society, hundreds of millions of women and girls around the world continue to be denied the right to participate freely in civic and economic life, lack fundamental legal protections, and remain vulnerable to exploitation and abuse;

Whereas, every year, approximately 12,000,000 girls are married before they reach the age of 18, which means that—

(1) nearly 33,000 girls are married every day; or

(2) nearly 23 girls are married every minute;

Whereas, despite global progress, it is predicted that by 2030 more than 150,000,000 more girls will marry before reaching the age of 18, and approximately 2,400,000 girls who are married before reaching the age of 18 are under the age of 15;

Whereas girls living in countries affected by conflict or other humanitarian crises are often the most vulnerable to child marriage,

and 9 of the 10 countries with the highest rates of child marriage are considered fragile or extremely fragile;

Whereas, according to the International Labour Organization, 71 percent of the estimated 40,300,000 victims of modern slavery in 2016 were women or girls;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (commonly referred to as "UNICEF")—

(1) approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have been victims of some form of physical violence;

(2) approximately 120,000,000 girls worldwide, slightly more than 1 in 10, have experienced forced sexual acts; and

(3) an estimated 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence;

Whereas, according to the 2018 report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons", from 2003 to 2018, 72 percent of all detected trafficking victims were women or girls;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, the United States Government launched a strategy entitled "United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally", which is the first interagency strategy that—

(1) addresses gender-based violence around the world;

(2) advances the rights and status of women and girls;

(3) promotes gender equality in United States foreign policy; and

(4) works to bring about a world in which all individuals can pursue their aspirations without the threat of violence;

Whereas, in June 2016, the Department of State released an update to that strategy, underscoring that "[p]reventing and responding to gender-based violence is a cornerstone of the U.S. Government's commitment to advancing human rights and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls";

Whereas, despite the achievements of individual female leaders and evidence that democracy and equality under the law form a mutually reinforcing relationship in which higher levels of equality are strongly correlated with the relative state of peace of a country, a healthier domestic security environment, and lower levels of aggression toward other countries—

(1) women around the world remain vastly underrepresented in—

(A) national and local legislatures and governments; and

(B) other high-level positions; and

(2) according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 25 percent of national parliamentarians and 21 percent of government ministers;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth, self-reliance, and political and social stability;

Whereas the overall level of violence against women is a better predictor of the peacefulness of a country, the compliance of a country with international treaty obligations, and the relations of a country with neighboring countries than indicators measuring the level of democracy, level of wealth, or level of institutionalization of the country;

Whereas, although the United Nations Millennium Project reached the goal of achieving gender parity in primary education in most countries in 2015, more work remains to be done to achieve gender equality in primary and secondary education, and particularly in secondary education worldwide as gender gaps persist and widen, by addressing—

(1) discriminatory practices;

(2) harmful cultural and social norms;

(3) inadequate sanitation facilities, including facilities to manage menstruation;

(4) child, early, and forced marriage;

(5) poverty;

(6) early pregnancy and motherhood;

(7) conflict and insecurity; and

(8) other factors that favor boys or devalue girls' education;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization—

(1) approximately 132,000,000 girls between the ages of 6 and 17 remain out of school;

(2) girls living in countries affected by conflict are 2.5 times more likely to be out of primary school than boys;

(3) girls are twice as likely as boys to never set foot in a classroom; and

(4) up to 30 percent of girls who drop out of school do so because of adolescent pregnancy or child marriage;

Whereas women around the world face a variety of constraints that severely limit their economic participation and productivity and remain underrepresented in the labor force;

Whereas the economic empowerment of women is inextricably linked to a myriad of other human rights that are essential to the ability of women to thrive as economic actors, including—

(1) living lives free of violence and exploitation;

(2) achieving the highest possible standard of health and well-being;

(3) enjoying full legal and human rights, such as access to registration, identification, and citizenship documents, and freedom of movement;

(4) access to formal and informal education;

(5) access to, and equal protection under, land and property rights;

(6) access to fundamental labor rights;

(7) the implementation of policies to address disproportionate care burdens; and

(8) receiving business and management skills and leadership opportunities;

Whereas closing the global gender gap in labor markets could increase worldwide gross domestic product by as much as \$28,000,000,000,000 by 2025;

Whereas, pursuant to section 3(b) of the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018 (22 U.S.C. 2151-2(b)), it is the international development co-operation policy of the United States—

(1) to reduce gender disparities with respect to economic, social, political, educational, and cultural resources, as well as wealth, opportunities, and services;

(2) to strive to eliminate gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities, including through efforts to develop standards and capacity to reduce gender-based violence in the workplace and other places where women work;

(3) to support activities that secure private property rights and land tenure for women in developing countries, including—

(A) supporting legal frameworks that give women equal rights to own, register, use, profit from, and inherit land and property;

(B) improving legal literacy to enable women to exercise the rights described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) improving the capacity of law enforcement and community leaders to enforce such rights;

(4) to increase the capability of women and girls to fully exercise their rights, determine their life outcomes, assume leadership roles, and influence decision making in households, communities, and societies; and

(5) to improve the access of women and girls to education, particularly higher education opportunities in business, finance, and management, in order to enhance financial literacy and business development, management, and strategy skills;

Whereas, according to the World Health Organization, global maternal mortality decreased by approximately 44 percent between 1990 and 2015, yet approximately 830 women and girls continue to die from preventable causes relating to pregnancy or childbirth each day, and 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries;

Whereas, according to the United Nations, of the 830 women and adolescent girls who die every day from preventable causes relating to pregnancy and childbirth, 507 die each day in countries that are considered fragile because of conflict or disaster, accounting for approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of all maternal deaths worldwide;

Whereas the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports that women and girls comprise approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 67,200,000 refugees and internally displaced or stateless individuals in the world;

Whereas women and girls in humanitarian emergencies, including those subject to forced displacement, face increased and exacerbated vulnerabilities to—

(1) gender-based violence, including rape, child marriage, domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and assault;

(2) disruptions in education and livelihood;

(3) lack of access to health services; and

(4) food insecurity and malnutrition;

Whereas malnutrition poses a variety of threats to women and girls specifically, as malnutrition can weaken their immune systems, making them more susceptible to infections, and affects their capacity to survive childbirth, and children born of malnourished women and girls are more likely to have cognitive impairments and higher risk of disease throughout their lives;

Whereas it is imperative—

(1) to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and girls; and

(2) to afford women and girls every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities; and

Whereas March 8, 2021, is recognized as International Women's Day, a global day—

(1) to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women in the past, present, and future; and

(2) to recognize the obstacles that women face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the fundamental human rights of women and girls have intrinsic value that affect the quality of life of women and girls;

(3) recognizes that the empowerment of women and girls is inextricably linked to the potential of a country to generate—

(A) economic growth and self-reliance;

(B) sustainable peace and democracy; and

(C) inclusive security;

(4) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women human rights defenders, activists, and civil society leaders, who have worked throughout history to ensure that women and girls are guaranteed equality and fundamental human rights;

(5) recognizes the unique cultural, historical, and religious differences throughout the world and urges the United States Government to act with respect and understanding toward legitimate differences when promoting any policies;

(6) reaffirms the commitment—

(A) to end discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(B) to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of women and girls;

(C) to pursue policies that guarantee the fundamental human rights of women and girls worldwide; and

(D) to promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of society and community, including conflict prevention, protection, peacemaking, and peacebuilding;

(7) supports sustainable, measurable, and global development that seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and

(8) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 101—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT, WHILE THE UNITED STATES FINDS VALUE AND USEFULNESS IN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION IN FULFILLING THE NEEDS OF THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER FREE AND OPEN ECONOMIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY, SIGNIFICANT REFORMS AT THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION ARE NEEDED AND THE UNITED STATES MUST THEREFORE CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP TO ACHIEVE THOSE REFORMS

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 101

Whereas the United States has led the formation, as well as reform, of rules governing the multilateral trading system since World War II;

Whereas the United States is a founding member of the World Trade Organization (in this preamble referred to as the "WTO") and a key architect of the organization;

Whereas the United States secured important commitments in the WTO to facilitate trade in goods and services, to prevent the application of non-scientific restrictions on United States agriculture, and to protect United States intellectual property;

Whereas the United States uses the rules of the WTO to benefit workers, farmers, and businesses in the United States by facilitating access to the 90 percent of the world's consumers who live outside the borders of the United States;

Whereas the fundamental purpose of the WTO is to create space for members to negotiate with each other, and the WTO reserves to those members exclusively the right to negotiate and adopt rules that reduce and eliminate trade barriers and discriminatory treatment;

Whereas the prompt settlement of disputes in which a member of the WTO considers that its rights are being impaired by the actions of another member is essential to the functioning of the WTO and the maintenance of a proper balance between the rights and obligations of members;

Whereas the WTO's dispute settlement function, including in particular the Appellate Body, has increasingly failed to enforce the rules of the WTO in a timely manner, and has usurped the negotiating prerogative of members by creating new obligations and

rights that are inconsistent with the rules negotiated by members;

Whereas the creation of those obligations and rights undermines—

(1) the WTO's negotiating function by discouraging members from making concessions; and

(2) the WTO's dispute settlement function by encouraging overuse of the process and undermining its legitimacy, including by preventing free market economies from responding to globally trade distortive practices by nonmarket economies;

Whereas the WTO does not have sufficient rules to discipline the distortive economic policies of nonmarket economies, such as policies relating to excess capacity and forced technology transfer, the special treatment those economies afford to state-owned enterprises, and their massive and opaque industrial subsidies;

Whereas there is long-standing bipartisan support in the United States Congress to reform the WTO to address those failings;

Whereas the current presidential administration, as well as prior administrations, raised concerns about the failings described in this preamble and have made reform of the WTO a top priority of United States trade policy;

Whereas the United States urges WTO members to work constructively with the United States to assess the reasons why the existing WTO rules have proven inadequate in order to create an atmosphere within the WTO that is conducive to the development of new rules less subject to jurisprudential drift;

Whereas the guiding principle for reform of the WTO, and the lens through which WTO members should consider specific reform proposals, is the restoration of the WTO's capability and capacity for negotiation between members; and

Whereas, given that the United States has achieved its trade policy objectives through active leadership at the WTO, and that an absence of that leadership would be filled by nonmarket economies that are hostile to a host of United States interests: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) while the United States finds value and usefulness in the World Trade Organization (in this resolution referred to as the "WTO") in order to fulfill the needs of the United States and other free and open economies in the 21st century, significant reforms are needed;

(2) the United States must therefore continue to demonstrate leadership to achieve reforms that restore the effectiveness of the WTO's—

(A) negotiating function;

(B) dispute settlement function so that it transparently, efficiently, and fully enforces outcomes negotiated by members rather than usurping their primacy by creating new rights or obligations; and

(C) rules for special and differential treatment to ensure those rules promote development for truly disadvantaged countries, rather than becoming tools for globally competitive countries to engage in protectionism and market distortions;

(3) the efforts to reform the negotiating function of the WTO should revitalize the negotiating function by providing confidence to members that the WTO operates according to the rules as negotiated and adopted by members;

(4) a revitalized negotiating function must include new rules that reflect the 21st century economy, further combat anticompetitive and protectionist barriers, and ensure disputes are efficiently resolved;

(5) the United States Trade Representative should continue to lead efforts to work with WTO members to pursue reforms at the WTO that—

(A) ensure the dispute settlement mechanism faithfully applies the rules adopted by members, including by undertaking measures to ensure the WTO's Appellate Body does not create new rights and obligations;

(B) improve public confidence in dispute settlement by promoting greater transparency and efficiency in the conduct of proceedings;

(C) redress the consistent failure by certain members to satisfy their notification obligations under various WTO agreements, including through measures that strengthen accountability;

(D) ensures rules for special and differential treatment are appropriately reserved for countries whose state of development and global competitiveness actually warrants such flexibility;

(E) create new rules and structures that can serve the interests of the United States while promoting peace, prosperity, good governance, transparency, effective operation of legal regimes, the rule of law, and free enterprise; and

(F) expand upon the trilateral negotiations currently underway with Japan and the European Union; and

(6) the United States Trade Representative should explore and assess specific reform proposals, including—

(A) pursuing plurilateral agreements that further the interests of the United States while limiting the benefits accruing to countries that are not parties to those agreements;

(B) efforts to ensure that incorrect interpretations by the Appellate Body, including with respect to the Agreement on Safeguards, the Agreement on Implementation of Article VI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, are corrected, and not to be deemed precedential;

(C) new rules and norms to address practices of nonmarket economies, such as practices relating to state-owned enterprises, which certain countries often utilize for objectives that cause severe trade distortions; and

(D) better implementation of existing rules, such as the prohibition in paragraph 4 of Article XIV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade on currency manipulation, to ensure that those rules are effective to preserve the rights of free market economies.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I have a request for one committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at 6 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.